

# After School...

## The Newsletter of Minneapolis Retired Teachers Inc.

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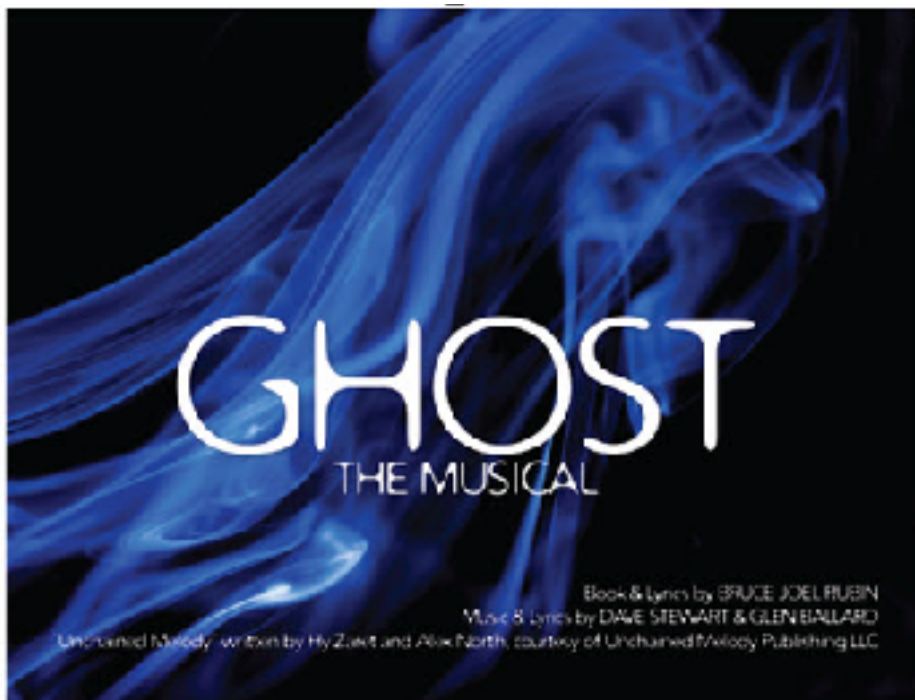
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## MRTI June Outing Wednesday, June 14, 2017

Adapted from the hit 1990 romantic drama film of the same name, *Ghost, the Musical* centers on lovers Sam and Molly, who are attacked as they are returning to their apartment. When Sam dies he becomes trapped between this world and the next. When he learns that Molly is in grave danger, Sam refuses to leave her. Desperate to communicate with Molly, Sam turns to a storefront psychic, Oda Mae Brown, in the hope of saving and protecting Molly.

*Ghost, the Musical* had its world premiere at the Manchester Opera House, Manchester, England in March 2011. Over the next two years, *Ghost* played in London's West End and toured the UK. moving to Broadway after that.

**OLd**Log THEATRE

The Old Log Theater production is a regional premier and promises to provide an afternoon of engaging musical entertainment.

The \$52.00 cost per person covers the show, a delicious lunch in the Cast and Cru Dining Room at the Old Log and bus transportation to and from the Eagles Club parking lot. Sign up for the trip at the April and May MRTI meetings. Space will fill up quickly, so sign up soon!

## Member Spotlight



Well....it all began some time before WWII. That is to say, I began sometime before World War II.

During the war, we lived in the tiny town of Eureka, Minnesota where we raised vegetables, chickens and rabbits. I remember we weren't allowed to get friendly with the rabbits; they were food not lovable cute bunnies. Chickens were fun; I used to grab them around their necks...they were dinner that night.

In 1945, we moved to Minneapolis so I could attend school. I can still remember the jars of canned chickens, rabbits and vegetables being assembled in rows on a shelf in the basement of our house on 51<sup>st</sup> and Dupont South. I began school at John Burroughs with my Kindergarten teacher, Evelyn Echko. About 22 years later, I walked in the halls of Burroughs as a new sixth grade teacher and stepped into my old kindergarten classroom where Evelyn was still teaching. As I peered in, she walked up and greeted me by saying "Hello, Dennis." Yikes!

I spent my formative years at Burroughs, making friends with people like Bob Ryder, who are close friends today. Things just didn't work out at Burroughs as I was shanghaied by Elmer Koch from 807 to become a math resource teacher. Leaving midyear was difficult but changing jobs with my new bride, Sharon, also a math resource teacher, made up for leaving a classroom full of wonderful students. About 20 of those kids attended our wedding and a couple participated in the ceremony

I spent three years working as resource teacher but again... (couldn't hold a job) I was grabbed by Harry Vakos, deputy superintendent, to do a new job working at Title I math where we developed and produced math materials and workshops for teachers in Title I schools.

## Did You Know...

**MRTI contributes to many programs that support Minneapolis children? Your dues support annual contributions to:**

- The Assistance League
- Mary's Place
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Minneapolis
- Jeremiah Program
- Harriet Tubman Center
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Twin Cities
- St. Joseph's Home for Children
- People Serving People
- Minneapolis Recreation

## Bill of Fare

**April - Fried chicken**  
**May - Taco bar**  
**As always, a vegetarian option is available;** just let your caller know or contact Gayle Marko. No other options are possible. Phone callers record both names and phone numbers for reservations which will be checked off at the ticket table. No-shows will be billed for the cost of the luncheon. If you have **NOT** been called by **Monday, a week before the luncheon**, and you wish to attend, please call **Gayle Marko** to make a reservation:  
**952-920-1395.**

## **MRTI Pension Letter**

**April, 2017**

*- Ed Andersen  
MRTI Legislative Chair*

Rep. Paul Thissen, DFL Minneapolis and member of the Minnesota Legislature Pension Commission, spoke at the March 28th RTC-59 meeting. He was somewhat hopeful that the TRA funding issues would be addressed this year. There is a significant budget surplus that can be used to fund E-12 education needs and support increased pension contributions by employers to match COLA reductions planned for retirees as proposed by the TRA Board of Trustees. The Governor supports the shared sacrifice TRA plan. This is a comparison of the TRA Plan and the Plan proposed by Speaker Kurt Daudt:

### **TRA Compromise Plan**

**1% Cola for 2018-2022, then return to 1.5%**  
**Active Employee Contribution remains 7.5%**  
**State contribution phased increase to 9.5%**  
**New state cost \$45 million per year**

### **Republican Speaker Kurt Daudt's Plan**

**1% Cola forever**  
**Active Employee Contribution to 8%**  
**No new state money**

The question is, are we going to have a billion dollar tax cut or adequate funding for education, health and roads?

**Committee of Thirteen and MRTI members** please call your Legislators, Speaker Daudt, LCPR members and Governor Dayton to ask for three things:

- 1. Support TRA's proposal as it is - it's a delicate balance.**
- 2. Support state funding to cover the costs of increased employer contributions to the pension fund. Governor Dayton has included funds for this in his budget for the first time in decades.**
- 3. Please avoid making additional cuts to current and future retiree benefits.**

## **Introducing....**

**Our  
Newest  
MRTI  
Board  
Member**



**.... Deb Becker**

This smiling face belongs to Deb Becker, our new Assistant Recording Secretary. Deb retired about five years ago and started coming to the MRTI luncheons with her friend Mary, also a retired Minneapolis Public Schools teacher. Always working in the Autism Program, Deb began her career at CityView and retired 18 years later from Andersen United Community School.

She has many hobbies and interests. In 1970, a friend gave Deb an elephant statue, inspiring a life-long interest in elephants and a collection which numbered over 1000 elephant-related objects. She even sponsors an African elephant, Ellie, who lives in Zimbabwe.

Volunteering comes easily to Deb. Now living near Loring Park, she serves on the Loring Park Board, is Chair of the Livability Committee at Loring Park, and works at the Loring Park Arts festival, the Pride festival, Winterfest, the Aquatennial, Holidazzle and the Loring Park Music festival.

Devoted to the Autism Community, Deb volunteers with *Autism Speaks*, an advocacy group which raises money to assist people with all forms of Autism and to fund research. (April 2 is World Autism Day). When she's not volunteering, Deb loves reading, playing games on her iPad and hanging out with friends.

Deb really enjoys being on the MRTI Calling Committee and is now the Assistant Chair. She loves the luncheons and our wonderful programs. When she heard about the MRTI Teacher Grants program, she decided that she wanted to do more to support the work of MRTI and called our President, Gregory McDaniels to inquire about serving on the Board. When the position of Assistant Recording Secretary opened, Deb accepted the position with enthusiasm. Citing the good things MRTI does in support of teachers, Deb said, "I am thrilled to be on the Board!" And we are thrilled to have her!



# MRTI Means Excellent Programs

Thanks to the work of our Program Committee, MRTI luncheons in January, February and March featured a variety of interesting and informative presentations.



In **January**, retired Minneapolis teacher **Sally Sudo** shared her experience as a prisoner of war in her own country. A member of the Education Committee of the Twin Cities Chapter, Japanese American

Citizens League, Sally was just 6 years old when President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942. With only a few days notice, Sally and her family were summarily moved from their home in the Seattle area to a Concentration Camp in Minidoka, Idaho.

Although Sally and her 11 siblings were born in the US, they were Japanese Americans. Caught up in the furor following the attack on Pearl Harbor, all Japanese Americans were suddenly suspect. Those living on the West



*Dust storm in the Japanese Camp, by Japanese resident*

Coast were moved to one of ten "resettlement" camps scattered across remote areas of the United States.

Forced to abandon their homes, bank accounts, businesses, and property, taking only what would fit in a single suitcase, Sally's family of 12 spent three and a half years living behind barbed wire fences in two uninsulated, unfinished barracks rooms in a desolate, wind-blown camp where temperatures ranged from -20 to 110 degrees.

Released after the war ended, most people no longer had homes to go back to or property to recover. Sally's family had relatives in Minnesota, so they came here to start over. It wasn't until 1988 that the U. S. Government gave any compensation to the internees. As a result of the Civil Liberties Act, Sally received \$20,000 and a letter of apology from President Ronald Reagan.

On the 75th anniversary of E.O. 9066, those of us who heard Sally's moving and important story were struck by the similarities between the anti-Japanese feelings and fear-driven government policies of the 1940s and the anti-Muslim, anti-Mexican, anti-immigrant, attitudes that penetrate every aspect of today's political actions and discourse.

**February's** program was a little lighter. Cabaret singer **Erin Schwab** and pianist/vocalist **Jay Fuchs** brought their joy, humor and musical talents to us with their musical revue, "*Erin and Jay - Swinging' on Broadway.*" For well over an hour, they kept us laughing at their jokes and stories and humming or even singing



along with Broadway tunes from Jerome Kern to Steven Sondheim. Erin and Jay are a good pair. Jay's keyboard skills and vocals support and showcase Erin's wide-ranging vocal abilities. A Minnesota native and a member of the vocal music

faculty at McNally Smith College of Music in St. Paul, Erin really knows how to work a song!

In honor of St. Patrick's Day, our **March** program was Irish vocal and instrumental music by the *New Pearl Buttons*, also known as the *Dunquin Irish Trio of Four*. **Sherry Ladig**, played the piano, sang and provided commentary.

Her husband, **Don Ladig**, performed on flute & whistle and **John Wenstrom** provided



mandolin and vocals as the group performed the traditional reels, jigs and songs of West Kerry, Ireland, and some of the Irish music which came to the American hill country during the Irish Immigration of the 19th century.



###

# A Mini Vacation

Do you like good theater and a scenic drive? Might you be interested in a mini vacation this summer or fall? If so, then look no further than the wonderful town of Spring Green, Wisconsin.

Not far from Madison, Spring Green is home to, not one, but two live theaters: the Up-the-Hill outdoor and the indoor Touchstone stages. The American Players theater company is outstanding, with a



number of permanent actors as well as summer actors from major companies across the country. Plays range from traditional classics to contemporary offerings. Along with a ticket purchase, there is an option of a variety of picnic offerings to enjoy on the grounds between matinee and evening performances. You can check out this season's productions at [americanplayers.org](http://americanplayers.org)

If you go, you will be close to many other attractions. This is **Frank Lloyd Wright** country where you can tour his home and **Taliesin** school. If you are a collector of things, you may visit the **House on the Rock** where you will be cured forever of the urge to collect. For wine lovers, there is the **Wollersheim Winery** with tours and samples, and, just 20 miles away, is the charming former Welsh lead-mining town of **Mineral Point** where a community of



serious artists create their work and where you can have a great lunch at the local Brewpub restaurant (Don't miss the corn soufflé.)

It is not only the destination but the modest journey that is rewarding. Try the scenic route along the Mississippi at least one way; then, perhaps, take I 94 on the return.

However, allow time for a coffee break in Red Wing at the **Hanisch Bakery** just a block off the main drag and see if you can resist the temptations there. Also, in Red Wing, a trip to the basement level of the **Red Wing Shoe Store** may reward you with a comfy fit of a whole array of footwear at discount prices. Continuing on, allow an hour or two at the **Marine Museum** in Winona [www.mmam.org](http://www.mmam.org) and you will be astonished at the fine collection of 19th and 20th century art.

There is a variety of lodging choices in Spring Green: the Spring Valley Inn and the Usonian Inn offer comfortable rooms with a healthy nod to F.L Wright design. For food, check out "Freddy Valentine's" in an old bank building, the "Spring Green Country Store" and "Pat's Place," a lovely F.L Wright building on the river, just a stone's throw from the theater.

*- Larry Risser*

## Program Schedule



April 18 - Gary Johnson, of the Better Business Bureau will speak.



May 16 - A student musical group from Sanford Middle School will perform.



June 14 - Our annual field trip  
Lunch & play, Ghost, the Musical at the Old Log Theater



September 19 - Welcome back  
luncheon  
Celebrating new retirees

### Spotlight on Denny, cont.

After about four years, I yearned for the classroom and ended up at Hiawatha and then, to get closer to home, moved over to Kenny. Around 1981, the school district did whole lot of re-organizing and I ended up at Lyndale, where I left the classroom in March of '82, for a six month job at 807, re-writing about fifty computer programs that had to be moved from the district's instructional computer to the district's main frame computer. (I was kind of a computer geek). The six month "temp" job turned into 25 years where, as my wife and some teacher friends suggest, I spent most of my days at 807 finding fiendish ways of making life in the classroom more difficult! All I can say is, hardly anyone knew what I did there and I won't tell!!!

After retirement, 20 + years ago, I needed something more to do and so I joined MRTI. I don't remember who, but someone talked me into joining the Board. About 2005, my dear friend, Nan Fraser, decided ten plus years as membership/yearbook chair was enough and maneuvered me into the job. Being a geek, I took Nan's computerized membership database and made it complicated... so much so that the board has had to hire a programmer to rewrite the mess I've made into a system that a person without advanced tech skills can use to take my position whenever I leave the board!

Interested in more political  
involvement?

**Retired Teachers Council 59  
(RTC 59)**

**Soup, Salad & Substance  
Luncheons**

**April 25, May 23, 2017**

**11:45 am**

**MFT Local 59 Office,**

**67 8th Avenue NE, Mpls**



Denny, Sharon and 10 of their 14 grandchildren at their 7<sup>th</sup> annual Grandma and Grandpa Camp; a five day 'joyful experience' at their cabin.

*Editor's Note: Denny didn't even scratch the surface of his list of retirement activities. He and Sharon travel to Hawaii and Europe, Denny serves on the MRTI Investment Committee, the Budget Committee, the Pensions & Legislation Committee, the Program Committee and in his spare time, Denny is a member of the Laurel & Hardy Blockheads Tent!*





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**MRTI Newsletter April 2017**

**Chris Poppe, editor**

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**Our meeting location**

Eagles Club #34/ American Legion

(On the corner of E. 25th St. & 25th Ave. S)

2507 E. 25th Street



**Plenty of free parking!**